

~~SENSITIVE~~

CIA/SAVA / WIND 720715



WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

Week Ending 15 July 1972

NSA Declassification/Release Instructions on File.

For the President Only

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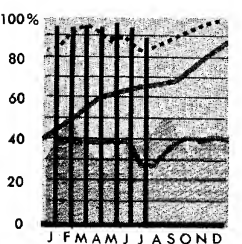
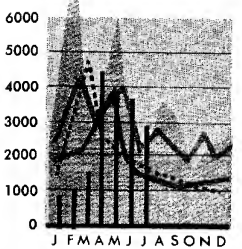
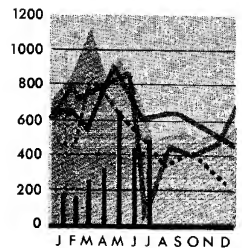
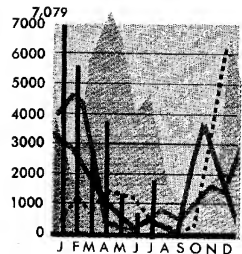
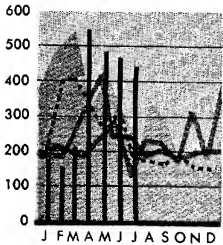
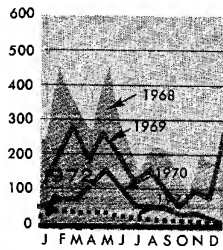
SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS

1968-1972

Weekly average for each month

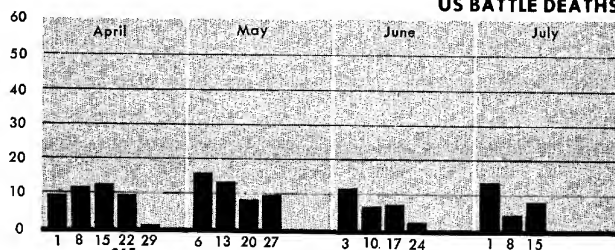
APRIL 1972 — JULY 1972

Weekly data as reported



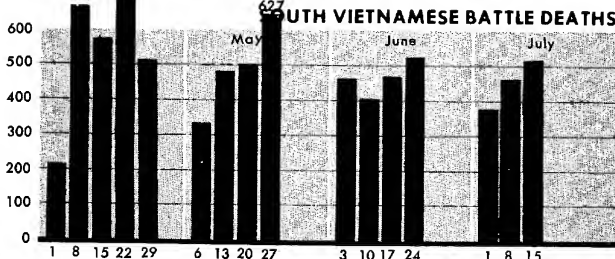
US BATTLE DEATHS

increased to 8 from last week's 4.



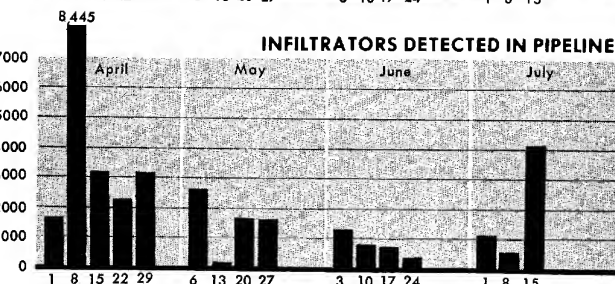
SOUTH VIETNAMESE BATTLE DEATHS

rose to 515 from the 462 of last week. The official total will change as late reports are received and will be lower than the figures released to the press by the GVN.



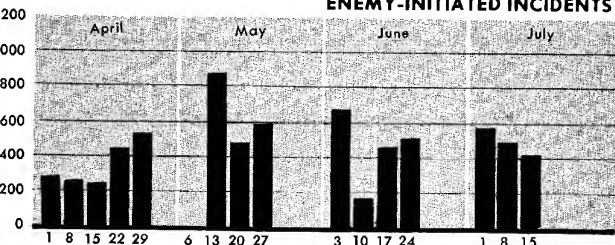
INFILTRATORS DETECTED IN PIPELINE

include eight regular and eight special purpose groups with 4,107 personnel. The estimate of infiltrators destined for Cambodia-South Vietnam since 1 October 1971 is now some 125,900 - 127,900.



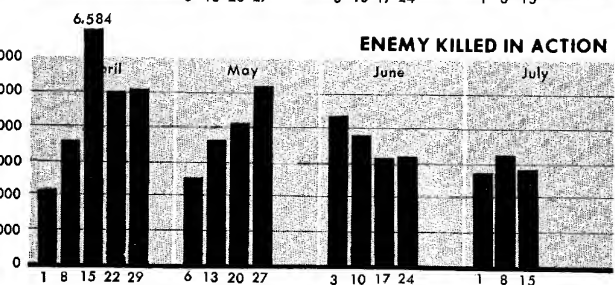
ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS

decreased to 408 from the 493 of last week.



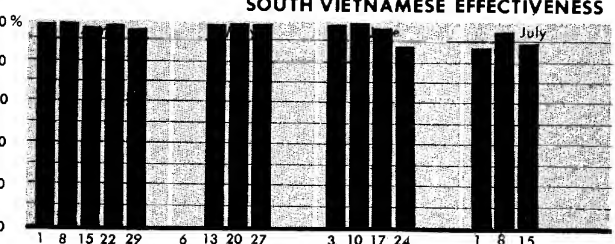
ENEMY KILLED IN ACTION

dropped from last week's 3,320 to 2,871.



SOUTH VIETNAMESE EFFECTIVENESS

as measured by the percentage of enemy killed by GVN forces declined to 89% from the previous week's 96%.



Statistics for the latest week shown are preliminary

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Enemy Activity

In South Vietnam, the most active areas during the past week were Quang Tri Province in northern Military Region (MR) 1 and the Kien Tuong-Dinh Tuong region of the northern Delta. Sharp fighting occurred throughout the week around Quang Tri City as the GVN Operation LAM SON 72 continued to inflict substantial casualties on North Vietnamese Army (NVA) forces defending the city. At least one regiment of the enemy's 312th Division, recently returned from northern Laos, has now been detected in Quang Tri Province; and communications intercepts indicate that the Division's other two regiments are preparing for movement, probably to South Vietnam. These developments, coupled with the introduction into the area of another NVA division (the 320B) which is made up of recent trainees, point to an all-out effort by the enemy to hold the territory won in April (especially Quang Tri City) and to push back the attacking GVN forces. By massing their forces and accepting the GVN challenge, however, the Communists are leading to the strong suit of the Allies -- the combined air, naval, and land firepower which has been gathered in northern MR 1. The enemy has also increased his harassment against the defenses of Hue in Thua Thien Province, but does not appear to be in a position to launch an all-out assault on the city. In the Delta, numerous contacts have occurred in the border area between Kien Tuong and Dinh Tuong Provinces, where the Communists are attempting to build up their forces and secure lines of communication to support future offensive operations. Other parts of the country have been relatively quiet and there seems little likelihood of any significant change in the near future.

Military activity in Cambodia was at a low level. The Communists continued their efforts to interdict major lines of communication, and succeeded in closing Routes 5 and 7 for several days during the week. The government is concerned by what appears to be a stepped up effort on the part of the Khmer Communists to bring the rural population close to the capital under their control. There has been a significant increase in the number of wholesale abductions from villages within a 15-mile radius of Phnom Penh. The objectives of this activity are twofold: to erode the government's influence in the countryside, and to make it easier to launch surprise attacks against the capital.

There was heavy enemy contact in south Laos over the weekend when at least two companies of NVA attacked a friendly irregular battalion east of Pakse. In the Khong Sedone sector to the north of Pakse, friendly forces have been meeting stiff resistance to their clearing operation but have managed to make modest gains. In north Laos, bad weather prevented the air resupply of some government units and forced them to withdraw toward their launch bases. The Communists demonstrated during the week that they are still able to harass Long Tieng occasionally with artillery fire, though inaccurately and with little effect. There was also a modest increase in enemy activity northeast of Luang Prabang, as well as a clash southwest of Pakbeng, the present terminus of the road built by the Chinese Communists into Laos.

Enemy Infiltration and Logistics

Infiltration of NVA personnel rose to the highest weekly total of the past three months as the North Vietnamese moved an estimated 4,100 replacement troops down toward South Vietnam in the seven-day period. Most of these troops were destined for South Vietnam's MR 1, where heavy losses have been sustained by the enemy during the current GVN counteroffensive. The Communists have also deployed several integral units, not included in the above infiltration figures, to or through the DMZ in an effort to augment their forces in Quang Tri Province. The total estimate of NVA infiltrators destined for South Vietnam and Cambodia since 1 October 1971 now stands at some 125,900 - 127,900.

In North Vietnam, the most recent photography still does not allow a confident judgment as to whether the new oil pipeline from the Chinese border is complete and operational. Recent photography provides firm evidence, however, of stepped up deliveries of trucks to North Vietnam in the last two months to meet Hanoi's high demand now that the country's rail system has been severely interdicted. Between 12 May and 26 June, at least 3,000 new trucks moved through the vehicle storage yards at the Chinese border -- nearly three times the number reportedly destroyed or damaged since the start of the present U.S. interdiction campaign. Should this rate of delivery continue for the rest of this year, North Vietnam's import of trucks from the Bloc in 1972 would exceed by a wide margin the estimated 6,000 imported in 1971, as well as the 6,800 imported in both 1967 and 1969 -- the previous peak years.

The Paris Negotiations

The public sessions of the Paris peace talks resumed on 13 July after a two month hiatus, and a nuance of possible change appeared in the Communist position. If continued, this hint of a shift may, over time, prove to be significant. North Vietnamese representative Xuan Thuy reiterated throughout the meeting the now standard Communist line that military issues must be settled in "parallel" with the political issues, and that the U.S. must cease its support of the Thieu government. Near the end of the meeting, however, Xuan Thuy indicated somewhat more explicitly than the Communists ever have in the past that the two Vietnamese sides "naturally" could hold discussions among themselves on the political issues involved in a Vietnam settlement. Although it is too early to draw definitive conclusions from this, Thuy's statement could be read as a hint that the Communists are now willing to negotiate the political issues with the Thieu government itself, and that they will no longer insist on the prior removal of that government before intra-Vietnamese negotiations get underway. One has to be wary about jumping to premature conclusions, however, since Xuan Thuy's words could constitute nothing but a slight cosmetic repackaging of an unchanged basic position, set up to support a subsequent argument that the U.S. should depose Thieu and after that, the Communists will "discuss" political issues with other Vietnamese groups, including the Thieu government's successors.

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